

PREFACE

The author derived his information from four main sources. These were the original documents, such as treaties, Comintern publications, and memoirs; the existing literature covering various aspects of the period here investigated; the press, both Iranian and Western; and personal observations made during the author's three-year stay in Iran in the crucial period between 1942 and 1945.

The book is addressed to the general reader, but with an eye to the specialist in the area. The author's sojourn in Iran convinced him of the necessity of supplying foreign service officers and industrial, commercial, or military representatives whose interests may link them to Iran with a body of political information that is not available elsewhere within the framework of a single volume.

The structure of the book has been adapted to the author's view of the period under description. To use literary analogy, this period resembles a drama in three acts. Act One presents the first dash between the new dynamic Communist State and the opposing forces in an Eastern country, jealous of its independence. The attempt to extend Communism to this area fails. Act Two provides a lull after the storm. Violent operations give way to undercover activity under the pretense of calm on the surface. In Act Three the storm returns with greater force than before. All the experience that the Soviet State has gained during the preceding two acts is utilized to secure success. But the resistance that the Communist offensive encounters is also stronger. At the time when this book is written it looks as if Act Three had ended with the victory of anti-Communist forces. Such a victory, however, can never be definite as long as there is a center from which Communism radiates and as long as the opposition is

apt to make mistakes. That is why Act Three, though concluding this study, does not conclude the course of history, and may be followed by the flow and ebb of action and inaction.

If there is any moral in this book, it is the same as that derived from the study of international affairs in general—namely, that an understanding of the past serves as a guide to the future.

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